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Welcome the Stranger? Recent History of American Christianity and Refugee Policy

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Welcome the Stranger? Recent History of American Christianity and Refugee Policy

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Abstract

Immigration is a controversial and complex issue. The United States has a history of welcoming millions of immigrants and refugees. Recent political rhetoric surrounding immigration has been negative and associated with danger and terrorism. Religious leaders along with their congregations have a history of advocating on behalf of the marginalized as well as combating against a broken immigration system that leaves eleven million people undocumented. This research paper uses a case study to explore the Sanctuary movement, a religious and political campaign that provided shelter for thousands of Central American refugees fleeing war. Interviews with seven religious leaders in Arizona and Michigan were conducted in order to reveal what strategies are being used to convince churchgoers to welcome non-citizens. This research concludes that religious leaders are using a mixture of theological, political, and economic arguments to convince their audiences to welcome the stranger.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

On September 2, 2010, Rosa Robles was apprehended for a minor traffic infraction. The officer asked Rosa if she was in the country legally. Since Rosa was undocumented, she immediately begged the official not to call Border Patrol. Her attempt was unsuccessful. Rosa spent 60 days in detention before she was released on a bond (Stuart, 2015). This same year, Governor Jan Brewer signed into law the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act, also known as the anti-immigrant Senate Bill 1070 (American Civil Liberties Union, 2017). This bill made being in Arizona without proper documentation a crime. It also allowed police officers to check the immigration status of those deemed suspicious during all lawful stops and arrests. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, this law invited racial profiling against those who were presumed to be foreign based on physical appearance or sound:

This policy altered the life of Rosa Robles, her family, and many other undocumented immigrants living in Arizona. Rosa met with lawyer Margo Cowan after receiving her final removal order. She had three days left before she had to depart the United States and return to Mexico when Cowan provided her with three options: leave, hide, or claim sanctuary. Rosa called Alison Harrington, Pastor of Southside Presbyterian Church. Southside has hosted undocumented immigrants in the past and sends volunteers into the desert to search for lost and dying migrants. The church unanimously agreed to host Rosa.

On August 7, 2014, Rosa walked through the doors of Southside with a small bag of belongings. Rosa did not plan to stay longer than 10 days. She was not a priority for

removal since she did not have a criminal record (Taracena, 2015). For 461 consecutive days, Rosa Robles Loreto received sanctuary inside Southside Presbyterian Church. Lawyer Cowan petitioned Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) to rescind Rosa's deportation order.

A movement called "We stand with Rosa" spread across Tucson. Churches across the city passed out yard signs and banners to their congregations. Local churches collected 7,000 letters from community members pleading on Rosa's behalf. The Pima County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in September 2014 asking the Department of Homeland Security to close Rosa's case. The Tucson City Council wrote a letter to the White House demanding that the mother of two stay in the United States. The Arizona Daily Star published an editorial in support of Rosa. Cowen sent a copy of all of these letters to ICE (Taracena, 2015). After much advocacy from churches, community members, and Cowan, Rosa was able to leave sanctuary. A confidential agreement was reached between federal immigration authorities and Cowen that allowed Rosa to live in the United States without fear of deportation. This process of sanctuary is not new. Providing sanctuary has been successful for other people such as Daniel Neyoy Ruiz and Francisco Perez Cordova and continues to be a tool that churches use to support undocumented immigrants.

From receiving millions of European immigrants at Ellis Island to welcoming thousands of Syrian refugees during the world's largest refugee crisis, the United States has a history of being a receiving nation. Despite this history, immigration has always been a controversial topic due to its economic, political, religious, and social complexities. The United States has yet to enact policies that will fix a system that

currently leaves 11 million people undocumented (Krogstad, Passel & Cohn, 2017).

Policy surrounding immigration continues to change overtime depending on the political administration in power. America has also had a long and complicated history of religion's impact on immigration policy. Immigration policy will be traced beginning with World War II and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration and ending with President Obama's administration in 2016.

The Sanctuary Movement during the 1980s will be highlighted to show the role of the church during a time when anti-immigration policies were enacted. Sanctuary is viewed as an ancient tradition of faith communities. The Underground Railroad was the first practical provision of sanctuary in the United States a few years before the Civil War (Southside Presbyterian Church, 2017). Congregations throughout the country helped slaves flee the South. They also opened their doors to objectors drafted to the Vietnam War. The Sanctuary Movement was a religious and political campaign that began in 1980 with the goal of providing shelter for Central American refugees fleeing the civil war. Thousands of Central Americans attempted to escape the dangerous civil wars by crossing through Mexico and into the perilous desert into the Southwest of the United States. Fewer than 3% of Salvadorans and Guatemalans who applied for asylum were approved for refugee status (Hall, 2017). The United States government did not recognize the majority of the Central Americans as political refugees. The number of churches involved in this political movement multiplied (Passaro & Phillips, 1986). Churches provided English lessons, basic humanitarian aid, as well as access to immigration attorneys. The founder of this movement, John Fife as well as other religious leaders were interviewed to show how Christianity is used to persuade people of faith to

welcome non-citizens. This paper aims to show that Christian leaders have had an influential role on refugee policy. Using the framing theory, I argue that most religious groups use tailored theological arguments to convince church attendees to welcome non-citizens to the United States.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Christianity and Immigration

“The story of religion in the United States is the story of immigration” (Ostling, 1999). However, religion and its impact on immigration has been an under researched topic. Religion plays a role in voting decisions, and these decisions reflect the attitudes and party affiliations of the public (Fastnow, Grant & Rudolph, 1999). Lenski (1962) stated that “for those who regard religion as a factor of minor importance in the life of our society, there will be many startling findings.” Religion is a factor comparable to social class in its influence on the behavior of individuals and society as a whole (p.3). Knoll (2009) agreed by stating that an individual’s religious beliefs can play an important role in shaping one’s core values which can then affect political ideology. The term “ethnoreligious” explains the influence of religion on individual attitudes. This helps researchers understand the importance of including religion as a variable that shapes policy attitudes. Religious factors are determinants of partisan preferences and have been shown to strongly affect U.S. presidential elections (Knoll, 2009, p. 314).

Köhrsen (2012) states that in today’s academia, society is facing an increasing debate about the public role of religion. He defines the public sphere as an open social area in which a significant part of the population of a society participates. Religion is then a communications and/or practice referring to a supernatural reality. Köhrsen (2012) also says that approaches which state that religion has an increasing presence on public sphere of modern societies are widely overstated. He insists that religious actors participate mainly in a non-religious way in the public sphere. These actors adapt their public

communication to the requirements of a secularized public sphere. Religious actors, organizations, groups, or individuals appear to prefer the use of non-religious communication when participating in the public sphere.

According to the Pew Research Center, almost all U.S. presidents have identified as Christian (Masci, 2017). Most refugees who enter the United States as religious minorities are Christian (Kishi, 2017). Immigration is viewed as a moral issue, compelling leaders of American religious organizations and churches to be vocal against anti-immigration policy. Davidson and Garcia (2014) affirmed that since every religious tradition contains messages for social justice on behalf of the marginalized, it is evident that religion would be a key factor in considering the determinants of attitudes towards immigrants and immigration policy. The authors use a passage from Deuteronomy 24:14, which states, “Do not take advantage of a hired worker who is poor and needy, whether that worker is a fellow Israelite or a foreigner residing in one of your towns.” This biblical mandate commands people of faith to help immigrants during their plight which includes being empathetic, inclusive, and fair.

Many Americans claim their religious beliefs have been highly influential in shaping their views about social issues (Pew Research Center, 2010). While this shows to be true for issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage, fewer cite religion as a top influence on their opinions on immigration. Even though many religious leaders have been outspoken advocates for immigration reform, only 7% of adults who take a position on immigration say that religion is the most important influence on their views on this issue. According to the Pew Research Center, about one in four churchgoers say their clergy are favorable to immigrants and nearly one fourth are hearing anti-immigration

messages. In the same study, 40% of respondents who say they have heard about immigration stated that their clergy were favorable towards immigration with 24% urging tolerance and welcoming attitudes toward strangers. About 23% characterized the messages from their clergy as generally negative about immigration. This includes appealing for strict enforcement of the law and stating that immigrants are a burden because they are taking jobs and receiving government services. Half of the public sees immigrants as strengths to the society while 38% say that immigrants threaten traditional American customs and values. When the public was asked about immigrant's contribution to the economy, democrats, younger Americans, Hispanic Catholics and religiously unaffiliated were more likely when compared to other groups to express positive views of immigrants. White Evangelicals express the least favorable views of immigrants (Pew Research Center, 2010).

A national survey by Public Religion Research Institute finds broad support from religious groups for a comprehensive approach for immigration reform. This includes support from clergy who are speaking out on this issue (Jones & Cox, 2010). The survey showed that 8 in 10 Americans rated four values to be extremely important when it came to immigration reform: enforcing the rule of law and promoting national security, ensuring fairness to taxpayers, protecting the dignity of every person, and keeping families together. White evangelical Protestants are just as likely as white Mainline Protestants, Catholics, and the unaffiliated to say protecting the dignity of every person is an extremely important value. Americans who attend religious services at least once or twice per month are comfortable with their clergy leaders mentioning issues of immigration, though only a quarter of Americans reported hearing about the issues from

their religious leaders. Catholics who attend services regularly are most likely to hear about immigration in church.

The United States is the most religious industrial democracy in the world (Masci, 2009). Wallset and Nteta (2016) researched whether or not clergy leaders influence public opinion on immigration. Their findings conclude that Methodists, Southern Baptists, and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America leaders successfully persuaded respondents who identify with their religious denominations to think differently about immigration and the difficulties of undocumented immigrants. Religiosity matters for how church attendees react to messages from their leaders. Religious leaders frequently speak about immigration issues in a way that expresses strong support for liberal reforms of the United States immigration system. This includes asking Americans to take a sympathetic view of the nation's immigrant population. Religion and immigration continue to interact in ways that are crucial to American society. This interaction shapes religious institutions and practices as well as the ways that newcomers become a part of their society (Joselit, Matovina, Suro, & Yang, 2012).

Several reasons as to why Americans are not accepting towards immigrants or refugees include the idea of cultural threat, nativism, the contact theory, group threat, as well as economic factors (Davidson & Garcia, 2014). Nativism, the policy of protecting the interests of native-born or established inhabitants against those of immigrants, guides an individual's opinions against immigrants. American identity can cause resistance to strangers and hostility toward out-groups. Nativism is a deep-seated American antipathy for internal "foreign" groups of various kinds, which has turned into intensive efforts to safeguard Americans from perceived 'threats' (Friedman, 1967). Higham (1958) suggests

a three-dimensional definition of the patterns of American nativism. This consists of anti-Catholicism with roots in European religious rivalries, xenophobia, the fear of foreigners and foreign radicalism, and racism, which includes the national conception of the Anglo-Saxon "race". Nativism is defined by the state of mind shared by segments of the dominate population which is characterized by expressions of anti-Catholicism, xenophobia, and racism directed toward other segments of the population within American society. Nativism in the United States continues to exist wherever there are a sufficient number of immigrants. Higham (1958) states that nativism qualifies as prejudice. It is regarded by students not only as a state of mind but as one which badly distorts the true nature of things. Nativism is a defensive type of nationalism. Nativism serves the function of marking people in the United States as being in but not of this country (Rodriguez, 2008).

Bosniak (1994) says policy makers, the press, and many academics have characterized the immigration of foreigners as a vital threat to the well-being of the United States. Often, this immigration debate becomes a debate over the boundaries of racism. Immigration is said to represents two types of threats: the first is posed by the identity of the immigrants from the third world, which is believed to bring increased crime rates, epidemic disease, and terrorism. The second is cost. Immigration is believed to bring economic, environmental, and social costs. These ideas then lead Americans to believe that immigrants are taking their jobs away, are a burden to the welfare and prison system, and deplete natural resources. Policy makers then respond to this perceived crisis by enacting dramatic and rash measures such as enhanced border enforcement politics. Economic factors also play a crucial role in the acceptance of immigrants. Anti-

immigrant anxieties are driven by economic insecurity and are impacted by the presence of a large or growing percentage of racialized immigrants (Ybarra, Sanchez & Sanchez, 2016). Increases in state Hispanic populations and state economic stressors along with the recession have led to a larger number of enacted anti-immigration policies on the state level.

Contact theory suggests that more interaction with immigrants can cause less tension and fear. The group theory on the other hand, may cause more because minorities are seen as a competition for scarce resources and a political threat. Emerson (2002) mentions the importance of finding ways to alleviate tension and inequality between racial groups. One solution includes the contact between members of racial groups, which may lead to attitudes that are more positive. Contact theorists share four conditions, which result in positive change: common goals, intergroup cooperation, equal status, and authority support. Bringing people together show individuals that their attitudes were irrational and would lead to attitudinal change. Emerson concludes that contact theory operates under the assumption that attitudes and behaviors are connected. If attitudes were changed, behavioral changes would follow.

Ayers (2009) asks whether immigration is a race issue. In his study, he evaluates the effects of racial resentments, racial contexts, and minority contact on Anglo, immigration policy preferences. Since the Immigration and nationality Act of 1965, immigration patterns in the United States have changed. Attitudes about immigration may be motivated more by racial resentments than other considerations. The ideological model proposes that attitudes about immigrants are driven by race. Because of an immigrant's minority status, public attention focuses on the race/ethnicity, which would

then bring forth prejudices. With the growth of the size of foreign-born population, immigration has become one of the most important national political issues (Hood, 1998). A study was done to investigate the impact of migrant context on Anglo opinions toward immigration. The findings include that Anglo support for increased immigration is directly related to the size of the documented migrant population. As the relative size of the undocumented migrant population increases, Anglo support for increased immigration decreases.” Both the contact hypothesis and group conflict theory help understand the relationship between intergroup interaction and opinion formation. Hood states that the development of positive intergroup attitudes via contact is dependent on significant and long-term interaction. However, when undocumented migrants are not official members of the public community due to fear of deportation, it is difficult for them to integrate themselves into the non-migrant social community. This makes it difficult to develop high-quality interactions between two groups.

Sanctuary Movement

As a result of anti-immigration policies, several faith leaders have responded in ways that include more than preaching about immigration at the pulpit. One example of this includes the Sanctuary movement. This movement formed as a reaction against immigration policy that was against helping Central American refugees. In 1985, three Catholic sisters, two Catholic priests, and one Presbyterian minister were indicted by a grand jury in Arizona because of transporting, harboring, and helping the entry of undocumented immigrants into the United States (Altman, 1990). The Presbyterian minister, John Fife along with other church members picked up Central American migrants and helped them cross the border to safety. Despite the legal ramifications, Fife

and his church went public on their support to welcome Central Americans (Hall, 2017). The party involved was accused of conspiring to violate the immigration laws in place. This was a major confrontation between the church and the state due to the fleeing population of Central Americans. The federal government stopped the sanctuary workers who were providing aid to refugees. About eighty religious refugee groups sued the federal government. The suit not only served to stop prosecution of sanctuary workers but also to increase public awareness of the refugee crisis (Passaro & Phillips, 1986). The sanctuary movement turned this debate into a political controversy. It quickly gained widespread publicity and support. In February 1983, approximately twenty churches offered public sanctuary to refugees. By January 1985, there were over 180 sanctuaries. Over 60,000 church members also supported the movement (Passaro & Phillips, 1986).

Many of the United States citizens who were aware of the massive deportations were forced to choose between obedience to civil authority and obedience to their religious principles, which commanded that they protect innocent human life. Passaro and Phillips (1986) stated that the sanctuary movement was a product of changing immigration policy and foreign affairs and was shaped by constitutional limitations and political processes. To the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the Central Americans were considered unwanted illegal aliens. To the Sanctuary Movement, they were considered political refugees who were seeking safety and have been driven out of their country due to a well-founded fear of persecution (Altman, 1990). The movement viewed the Central American refugees as equivalent to the Jews whom were turned away back to death in the 1940s after attempting to flee from the Nazis. The leaders did not want history to repeat itself and as a result took a stand. Despite many migrants meeting

the requirements for asylum, many were not accepted. Instead, they were deported back to the violence they hoped to escape (Hall, 2017). The initiative known as the New Sanctuary Movement took place in 2006. During this time, raids in the workplace and neighborhood escalated. Congregations opened their doors to those facing deportations (Southside Presbyterian Church, 2017). Hundreds of communities of faiths have signed the Sanctuary Pledge which states;

“As people of faith and people of conscience, we pledge to resist the newly elected Administration’s policy proposals to target and deport millions of undocumented immigrants, and discriminate against marginalized communities. We will open up our congregations and communities as sanctuary spaces for those targeted by hate, and work alongside our friends, families and neighbors to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people.”

Denominations

The Catholic Church has taken the strongest stand on immigration reform measures and on welcoming the stranger (Knoll, 2009). Religious institutions have responded to the immigration crisis by providing for the needs of immigrants. Menjivar (2003) examined the role of the Catholic Church in the lives of Salvadoran immigrants. When assisting immigrants and advocating for them, religious workers have often challenged U.S. immigration policies while standing rooted in religious teachings. The Catholic Church has created centers across the United States that assist immigrants.

The Catholic social teaching states that an ordered economy must be shaped by three questions: What does the economy do for people? What does it do to people? In addition, how do people participate in it? (Groody, 2009). These teachings emphasize that the economy is made for human beings, not human beings for the economy. When

people cross borders without proper documentation, most are not simply breaking civil laws but obeying the laws of human nature. This includes the need to find work in order to feed their families and attain lives that are more dignified. This is the theological perspective of immigration.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops made the following announcement in the year 2000;

“We bishops commit ourselves and all the members of our church communities to continue the work of advocacy for laws that respect the human rights of immigrants and preserve the unity of the immigrant family....We join with others of good will in a call for legalization opportunities for the maximum number of undocumented persons, particularly those have built equities and otherwise contributed to their communities” (Knoll, 2009).

A coordinated Catholic effort in the United States to aid immigrants eventually came with the formation of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. The organization dealt primarily with the United States Government as a primary advocate for Catholic immigrants (Gribble, 2001).

The Evangelical Protestants, according to Knoll are similar to the Catholic Church to a certain extent. Richard Land, head of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention announced in 2006 that though there is an obligation to support the government's laws, as citizens of the Kingdom there is a divine mandate to act compassionately toward those who are in need (Knoll, 2009, p. 315). Menjivar believed that the Evangelical churches have taken the opposite action when compared to the Catholics and Salvadoran immigrants. The Evangelical churches promoted individual spiritual discovery. In a case study of three churches located in San Francisco, Washington D.C., and Phoenix, the churches did not believe that the church should seek

solutions to social problems. This mindset is not the same for all evangelicals. Rhodan (2013) shares that a branch of the evangelical Christian community has been advocating for comprehensive immigration reform, also known as Biblical immigration. For months, Christian evangelical groups have been praying for immigration reform. Over 100,000 Christian supporters of the Evangelical Immigration Table, which is a broad coalition of evangelical organization and leaders advocating for immigration reform consistent with biblical values, have advocated politically about the issue. Jim Wallis, theologian, political advocate, and President of Sojourners magazine says that evangelicals realize how the stranger is to be treated. Kullberg, leader behind Evangelicals for Biblical Immigration, wrote a letter to Congress in 2013 stating that the Bible teaches us to be kind to the sojourner. Over a thousand evangelical Christians signed this letter.

Nichols (2008) states that some tension between evangelical theology and human rights exists. While many evangelicals are aware of human right issues, there are obstacles to the full commitment to the human rights regime. This includes the primacy of evangelism. The focus lies on the Great Commission and conversion as a priority. When advocating for human rights creates a pathway for conversation on faith, evangelicals are compelled to engage.

Mainline Protestants are also similar to the Catholic Church when it comes to supporting immigrants. Episcopalian Migration Ministries, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, the United Methodist Church, and the Presbyterian Church all have policy statements that include the importance of welcoming the stranger and providing a path to permanence for those working in the United States (Knoll, 2009). Mark Adams, Presbyterian minister and one of the authors

of “Bishops on the Border,” shared his perspective on immigration issues. He along with a group of bishops from the Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, and United Methodist denomination, addressed immigration issues on a political and religious level. These religious leaders engaged with the immigrant community and advocated for immigration reform.

Political History of Refugee Policy 1933-2016

A refugee defined by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is someone who has been forced to flee his or her country due to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group. An immigrant is someone who has requested permanent residence or citizenship in a new country but under different conditions than a refugee. These reasons are typically economic or familial reasons (Martorella, 1993). The United States has a long history of providing protection and help to refugees. Every President from Washington to Franklin Roosevelt has been confronted with major problems relating to granting asylum to political refugees (Rienhold, 1939). The situation is no different in this present time.

President Trump is an example of a politician who is anti-immigrant. He has enacted many anti-immigration policies, which include more immigration enforcement, travel bans, and the removal of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program (Park, 2017). Trump issued an executive order stripping federal grant money from sanctuary cities. He also issued the Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvement order which focuses on building a wall between the United States and Mexico. On January 27, 2017, Trump issued EO 13767, otherwise referred to as the

travel ban. Seven majority-Muslim countries were temporary banned admission to the United States. Refugee admissions were suspended for 120 days. In 2012, the Obama administration announced an executive order that created the DACA program. DACA provided work permits for people who were brought to the United States without the proper documentation before the age of 16. Trump announced the end of the DACA program (Verbruggen, 2017).

Trump's response to the immigration crisis in the United States is not new. A trend of denying people from entering the country can be seen by analyzing the recent history of immigration policy. One example is World War II (WWII). The outbreak of WWII influenced the number of refugees attempting to flee Nazi persecution. At least 110,000 Jewish refugees escaped to the United States from territory occupied by the Nazi between 1933 to 1941. Hundreds of thousands more applied to immigrate to the United States but were unsuccessful (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum). As the refugee crisis began in 1938, the competition grew for a limited number of visas. The United States at this point had no refugee policy and had a limited number of slots dedicated to immigrants from certain countries. President Franklin D. Roosevelt took action to rescue European Jews after receiving pressure from the government and the American Jewish community. In 1941, Roosevelt stated the following;

“For centuries this country has always been the traditional haven of refuge for countless victims of religious and political persecution in other lands. . . It was quite fitting, therefore, that the United States government should follow its traditional role and take the lead..” (Orchard & Gillies, 2015).

Roosevelt signed an executive order, which established the War Refugee Board in 1944.

The War Refugee Board's was created to provide avenues of rescue and relief to the Jews

in Nazi controlled Europe (Mendelsohn, 1980). The board worked with private individuals and organizations. The goal was to establish a safe haven in New York for 1,000 refugees outside of the quotas which were in place. Despite their attempts, the effectiveness of the board was seen as being too little and too late.

Under the Roosevelt administration, the SS St. Louis German ocean liner that carried nine hundred thirty-seven people was turned away. After being denied at Cuba, passengers cabled President Roosevelt only to receive no response. The ship was turned away after being notified that they should wait their turn on the waiting list and obtain visas before they are admissible. About twenty percent of the group died before the end of the Holocaust (Wang, 2017).

Orchard and Gillies (2015) examined Roosevelt's influence on global views in regards to refugee protection. He compared both Roosevelt's impact to Truman. While both presidents demonstrated a strong commitment to refugees, only Truman was able to bring about change in U.S. policy. The first refugee legislation enacted by the U.S. Congress was the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 under Truman's administration (Refugee Council USA, 2004). This legislation provided the admission of 400,000 displaced Europeans. Truman was in a different position than Roosevelt when it came to pushing Congress on immigration policy. Truman was driven by humanitarian concerns but he was also concerned over how refugees and displaced persons could affect the stability of postwar Europe. For Truman, a combination of humanitarian impulse along with political considerations directed his treatment of refugees (Orchard & Gillies, 2015). In Truman's statement on displaced persons in 1945, he stated;

“The war has brought in its wake an appalling dislocation of populations in Europe...The United States shares the

responsibility to relieve the suffering. To the extent that our present immigration laws permit, everything possible should be done at once to facilitate the entrance of some of these displaced persons and refugees into the United States. In this way we may do something to relieve human misery and set an example to the other countries of the world which are able to receive some of these war sufferers. I feel that it is essential that we do this ourselves to show our good faith in requesting other nations to open their doors for this purpose" (Truman Statement on Displaced Persons, 2006).

During Truman's administration, 450,000 refugees were resettled from 1945 to 1952.

This constituted a major shift in the United States immigration policy since it established the precedent for admitting large numbers of refugees under exceptional circumstances (Goren, 1984). According to opinion polls, anti-Semitic sentiments were harbored by half of the American people and expressed by political leaders. American popular opinion was against accepting new refugees. A Gallup poll from 1938 concluded that 72% of Americans believed that the United States should not allow a larger number of Jewish exiles from Germany to resettle within the country (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum). The 1951 Refugee Convention was created and this served as a key legal document ratified by 145 states. The document defined the term refugee and outlined their rights and the legal obligations of States to protect them. States were expected to cooperate with UNCHR and ensure that refugees are protected (UNHCR, 2001).

Under President Dwight D. Eisenhower's administration, the Refugee Relief Act of 1953 was passed. This was the second refugee admissions and resettlement law. In total, the Refugee Relief Act admitted over 209,000 refugees (The Refugee Relief Act, 1956). President Eisenhower worked with state governors to help find jobs and homes for eligible refugees.

President Lyndon Johnson enacted the transformative legislative reform known as the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (INA). The INA established a process that prioritizes family ties, occupational, and political refugees. This new law also abolished quotas that banned nearly all Asian and African newcomers (Tichenor, 2016).

Since the ban of Asian refugees was removed, President Gerald Ford was allowed the ability to play a role in assisting Vietnamese Refugees. Ford asked Congress to approve a humanitarian aid package for Vietnamese refugees. He stated that the United States had a long-standing reputation for helping the oppressed (Stur, 2015). Ford continued to impress the idea that the United States was strong yet benevolent when it came to receiving refugees. He spoke publically about considering the plight of Vietnamese refugees and pleaded that resettlement assistance would be provided to them. Despite his advocacy for refugees, only 36 percent of Americans surveyed approved of Ford's program. Refugees would only cause more competition for jobs and would be a painful reminder of the war. Despite the pushback, Ford persevered and signed the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act in 1975, which allowed the entry of about 130,000 Vietnamese refugees, related to or affiliated with Americans.

"The year 1980 marked the opening of a decade of public controversy over U.S. refugee policy unprecedented since World War II" (Gzesh, 2006). Jimmy Carter signed an important act that would affect refugee admissions. The Refugee Act of 1980 was intended to furnish an orderly procedure for processing and admitting refugees. The main objectives of this act were to provide a definition of the term refugee and set a new quota for the admission of refugees (Passaro & Phillips, 1986). This new definition expanded

the range of refugee status since it now allowed an immigrant to claim refugee status based on nationality or membership of a social group.

This act provided the admissions for 50,000 refugees from 1980-1982. After 1982, the president needed to consult with Congress to determine the number of refugees allowed to enter. Their admission would be based on the humanitarian concerns as well as national interest. President Carter took the appropriate steps to welcome 125,000 refugees from Cuba (New York Times, 1987). Though his initial response was to welcome Cuba refugees, he quickly became overwhelmed at the influx of people. When it came to the Iranian Revolution, Carter banned Iranians, including refugees as a whole:

“First, the United States of America is breaking diplomatic relations with the Government of Iran. The Secretary of State has informed the Government of Iran that its Embassy and consulates in the United States are to be closed immediately. All Iranian diplomatic and consular officials have been declared persona non grata and must leave this country by midnight tomorrow...The Secretary of Treasury and the Attorney General will invalidate all visas issued to Iranian citizens for future entry into the United States, effective today. We will not reissue visas, nor will we issue new visas, except for compelling and proven humanitarian reasons or where the national interest of our own country requires. This directive will be interpreted very strictly” (Carter, 1980).

Hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans, Guatemalans, and Nicaraguans fled north due to the civil war, oppression, and economic devastation. The Central American exodus started at the end of Carter’s administration leaving President Ronald Reagan to experience the difficulties of refugee and immigration policy. Gzesh (2006) declared that on one side were the immigrants’ rights lawyers, liberal members of Congress, religious activities, and refugees and on the other were President Reagan and his administration, the State Department, Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and

conservative members of Congress. The first group demanded international human rights and religious principles while the Reagan administration fought towards national security. The Reagan administration's policy on human rights was inherently inconsistent, flawed, and lacked understanding and moral sensitivity. In 1986, Congress passed the immigration bill that Reagan would consider amnesty. This bill provided 2.7 million of the estimated 3.2 million immigrants with proper documentation to stay in the United States (Kenny, 2014). Three million undocumented immigrants applied for legal status under IRCA and ultimately, about 2.7 million received it (Badger, 2014).

President George Bush followed Reagan's executive authority to protect refugees and immigrants from deportation. The 1986 reform left out the spouses and children of individuals who were in the legalization process. Bush created the Family Fairness program, which avoided separating families. This program had the potential to protect as many as 1.5 million families (American Immigration Council, 2014). During his administration, Bush asked Congress for a small increase in the number of admitted refugees. He proposed a ceiling of 125,000 refugees with an increase of those from Africa and decrease of those from Near East and South Asia (Pear, 1989). At this point, the number of refugees worldwide was 14 million.

A difficult issue when discussing immigration was how to create both a coherent and compassionate policy. Martorella (1993) stated that the George Bush and Bill Clinton refused to grant asylum to boatloads of Haitian refugees. Between the early 1980s and 1990s, the highest percentage of applicants granted asylum came from the former Soviet Union, China, and Iran. The lowest percentage came from Sri Lanka, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Haiti. While the U.S. Department of State believes that the asylum

seekers were economic refugees, human rights groups believe that the refugees have a well-founded fear of persecution. In 1993, President Clinton said the United States would continue the ban on what was known as the Haitian Exodus (Sciolino, 1993). He confirmed that there would be a practice of deporting those who fled Haiti by boat. There would also be an increase of immigration officers throughout Haiti to process applications inside of the United States.

Under George W Bush's administration, the White House announced that it would admit 70,000 refugees into the United States. Due to stricter security measures after the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, only 27,000 refugees were admitted into the United States (Jones, 2002). Catholic bishops and other religious leaders criticized Bush's policy on receiving fewer refugees. Since the start of the Iraq war initiated by Bush, over a million Iraqi refugees fled across the world (Kanbar, 2003). By the end of 2012, about 73,000 Iraqi refugees sought safety in the United States. President Obama stated that the efforts to resettle Iraqi refugees would continue.

Obama ended the "wet foot, dry foot" policy enacted by Clinton. This policy allowed Cuban refugees to enter the United States without visas. This policy was part of the process of normalizing relations between the United States and Cuba. The idea was to treat Cuban migrants the same as other migrants from around the world (NPR, 2017). Obama stated in 2016 that he would accept 110,000 refugees worldwide, which is a 60% increase in the number of refugees that were welcomed in 2015 (Rhodan, 2016). At a United Nations General Assembly meeting, Obama referred to the global refugee crisis as a test of common humanity. Obama recommended that world leaders to do more to help Syrian refugees who are being driven out of their homes. In 2016, over 38,000 Muslim

refugees entered into the United States. This is the highest number of Muslim refugees admitted since the data on religious affiliations first became available in 2002 (Connor, 2016). President Obama stated that if national security is a concern, shutting the door on refugees is precisely the wrong approach (Schwartz, 2016). By receiving Syrian refugees, the United States is strengthening U.S. national security by guarding the stability of key allies that border Syria. These include Jordan, Turkey, and Lebanon, which host more than 4 million refugees. Obama committed to receiving 10,000 refugees, which account for 0.2 percent of those seeking safety.

With this brief history of immigration policy, we can see that many Presidents have enacted similar policies. Trump's anti-immigration policies are not a new concept. Instead, they are built on ideas that prioritize the needs of Americans first. With the current immigration system, the legal status of over eleven million undocumented immigrants is not viewed as a priority. Other presidents, such as Reagan and Obama have been more open to immigrants and refugees. This includes advocating for a pathway of citizenship to those who are undocumented.

Theory

Goffman coined the theory of frame analysis, also known as the framing theory. The theory posits that people interpret the world around them through their primary framework (Goffman, 1974). This framework influences how individuals interpret, process, and express data in their context. Fairhurst (2005) defines framing as the ability to shape the meaning of a subject and to judge its character and significance. To hold the frame of a subject means to choose one meaning over another. This theory provides the opportunity to view leadership in terms of power relations. With a leader's mastery of this skill, there is a contribution to the imbalance of power relations. The skill of framing is based on three components: language, thought, and forethought. Language helps an individual focus, classify and put ideas in categories. Language also assists in remembering and retrieving information. "The thought component examines the role of mental models in deciding what and how we choose to frame because leaders who understand their world can explain their world" (Fairhurst, 2005, p. 168). Depending on the development of this skill, different communication goals will be reached given the constraints and opportunities in their contexts. The forethought component deals with how to exert control over communication.

Framing is about how a story is told and then perceived by the audience. Depending on the opinion provided by the leader, the audience then chooses how to act based on how that information has been received. While literature on religion and immigration exists, there is a limitation of research that includes how framing impacts religion. This paper will focus on how religious leaders have framed immigration and what strategies they use to instill their ideas and beliefs onto their audience in order to

welcome the stranger. Few Americans consider religion the most important influence on their opinions about immigration. About 27% of people state that their opinions come from personal experience, 20% state that it comes from their education, and 21% refer to what they have seen or read in the media. Those who state that religion is the most important influence are less likely to place priority on high immigration enforcement when compared to other respondents (Pew Research Center, 2010). The framing theory will help understand how religious leaders frame immigration in a positive light and how that is perceived by their audience. Since the discourse is a political one, religious leaders are reframing the topic from an ideological argument to a theological one. This includes framing immigrants in a positive way to their audiences by utilizing phrases such as welcoming the stranger, restoring the dignity of the person, and/or showing compassion to the foreigner. Many of these arguments are taken from both the Old Testament and the New Testament in The Bible. These theological arguments are used to convince their audiences to welcome noncitizens to the United States.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

To measure the impact that Christianity has had on refugee policy as well as the framing methods that religious leaders are using, this paper utilized case study methodology. Data gathering was conducted through analysis of relevant organizational and media texts and qualitative interviews. First, newsletters, church resources, websites, and articles were analyzed to evaluate how terminology regarding noncitizens was framed to convince the audience to be welcoming. Then seven religious leaders from different denominations in Arizona and Michigan were interviewed, including the founder of the Sanctuary movement. Arizona was chosen since the Sanctuary Movement originated in this state. Arizona is also known for being the hub of immigration due to its geographical location near the United States and Mexico border. This state has also enacted one of the two most well known anti-immigration policies; Arizona's SB1070. On the contrary, Michigan has been considered a welcoming state and has welcomed refugees for decades. The state of Michigan has developed initiatives that have declared it a more welcoming place. One example of this is Welcoming Michigan, an integration initiative that collaborates with 19 Michigan localities that have declared themselves a welcoming city, county, or township. Both Arizona and Michigan are states that have welcomed immigrants in terms of sanctuary and welcoming cities. They also have a plethora of religious leaders and organizations advocating for immigration reform.

The following leaders were chosen due to their extensive work of welcoming noncitizens into the United States. The term noncitizens include immigrants, migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. The interviewees include the following: Mark Adams who

is a pastor, missionary, and the United States Coordinator of the Bi-National ministry, Frontera de Cristo based in Douglas, Arizona. Eric Ledermann is pastor of University Presbyterian Church in Tempe, Arizona. John Fife is the founder of the Sanctuary movement and former pastor of Southside Presbyterian Church in Tucson, Arizona. Kate Kooyman is an ordained minister of the Reformed Church of America. She currently serves as the Christian Reformed Church of North America's Office of Social Justice located in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Jill Zundel is the Senior Pastor of Central United Methodist Church in downtown Detroit, Michigan. Reverend Wayne Dziekan is the Director of the Secretariat for Justice and Peace for the Catholic Diocese in Gaylord, Michigan. Paul Stankewitz was also interviewed as the Policy Advocate with the Michigan Catholic Conference.

Once interviewees were identified, they were contacted via phone or email and asked if they would like to participate. Upon consent, an appointment was set up for the interview. The interviews lasted from thirty minutes to an hour. The information was recorded, transcribed, and analyzed. The open-ended questions include the following:

- What is your current role?
- What is your stance on immigration reform?
- What is your denominations stance on immigration reform?
- Do you preach about immigration? If so, how many times per year?
- Are your sermons on immigration tailored or are they general sermons?
- What scriptures do you use, if any? Are there specific resources you use?
- What strategies do you use to convince your audience to welcome the stranger?
- What do you consider effective in persuading people to welcome noncitizens?

- What is the surrounding rhetoric about the “stranger” in your area?
- How are immigrants perceived? What words are used to describe the stranger?
- Is persuading your audience to be welcoming difficult due to your current context? If so, how do you frame immigration in a positive way?
- What types of tension or conflict arise during your work advocating for non-citizens?
- Do you use any marketing tools to persuade people to welcome noncitizens?
- Is any money raised to support the cause?
- Do you engage in any political advocacy? If so, what do you do?

The Sanctuary movement was chosen as a case study to show the impact that the church had on immigration policy during the 1980s. The interview with founder of the movement, John Fife included additional questions. These questions including the following:

- How did the movement begin?
- What motivated you to start this movement?
- What role did the Southside Presbyterian Church play in this movement?
- What role does your faith play in the Sanctuary Movement?
- What would you say is the impact that the religious community had on immigration policy as a result of the Sanctuary Movement?

The Sanctuary Movement continues to serve as protection for those who are in risk of deportation. The interviewees from both states shared that their strategies to influence their audience to welcome noncitizens include political, economic, and theological arguments. Scripture and education on the realities of the broken immigration system were two main resources used to persuade audiences.

CHAPTER 4

Results

“We forced the Reagan administration to change his policy to Central American refugees. We eventually got what we set out to accomplish. The administration agreed to stop all deportations to El Salvador and Guatemala. They agreed to give everyone who was here without documents from those countries, temporary protective status. And they agreed to a whole series of reforms to the political asylum process. We basically won that issue with the Reagan administration” (J. Fife, personal communication, September 21, 2017).

John Fife served as the pastor of Southside Presbyterian Church (SPC) during the beginning of the Sanctuary movement. Central American refugees started flooding the borders of Arizona. “We did what churches do: we responded by helping with food, housing, and family emergencies.” Migrants from El Salvador walked aimlessly around Oregon Pipe Cactus National Monument in July of 1980. The temperature was above 110 degrees Fahrenheit and over thirteen migrants died. Survivors were taken to the Tucson hospital where Fife was asked to provide pastoral care to traumatized survivors. Fife then heard the reasons why Salvadorians were fleeing their country. He began to learn of the death squads, torture, and massacre of villages that were taking place in Central America. As a result, SPC began a legal aid program for Central Americans and helped them apply for political asylum. The Presbyterian Church provided the first grant to initiate the service.

A partnership was formed between the Tucson ecumenical council. Catholic parishes, main line protestant churches in Tucson, along with a legal aid organization helped refugees apply for political asylum. After eight or nine months, Salvadorians and Guatemalans were denied of political asylum because of the United States aid

department's policy that viewed them as economic migrants. At this point, Fife along with Jim Corbett, a Quaker decided that they had no choice but to smuggle refugees safely across the border. This would prevent refugees from being detained and deported immediately by border patrol agents upon crossing. This went on for about nine months. Fife received messages through the political asylum hearings from the government that threatened indictment if the smuggling did not stop. Fife still had a desire to keep helping refugees. To prevent the indictment, a meeting occurred that would create the first sanctuary church at SPC. The process included asking the congregation to be a public sanctuary for Central American refugees. The vote was by secret ballot and there were only two negative votes. The church was committed. Fife later learned that a meeting was held in the Justice Department in Washington D.C. regarding SPC. The Justice Department decided that no indicting was to take place. This would prevent attention from being called to the issue. Much to the astonishment of the church, the word spread and phone calls were received from churches and synagogues around the country inquiring on how they can also serve as a sanctuary church. The church never intended to start a movement. Fife stated they were simply playing self-defense.

Fife stated that churches and synagogues were at the core or base of the sanctuary movement. Cities became sanctuary cities. Colleges and universities became sanctuary places for Central American refugees. The state of New Mexico became a sanctuary state. Secular institutions signed on not based on faith but of their belief in human rights. The religious movement broadened into secular institutions, which was very important to what was eventually accomplished. Fife's role now includes figuring out how to do sanctuary again in meaningful ways under the current political circumstances, which are

very different from the 1980s. "Sanctuary seems to be one of the primary ways that people have figured out to resist the horrible racism of the Trump administration." He continues to state that Sanctuary seems to be a viable strategy from states to cities, to counties, to churches to synagogues and now mosques are signing up because of the recent Muslim ban.

Arizona

Arizona borders the two Mexican states of Chihuahua and Sonora. Due to its geographical proximity, immigration is bound to occur from the lower developed nation of Mexico to the United States. Arizona has a history of anti-immigration policy;

"From 2004 to 2010, Arizona's administrations and Congresses implemented a far-reaching series of policies against undocumented immigrants. Among them was the passage of more than 40 laws that sought results ranging from excluding immigrants from enjoying certain social and public services to sanctioning them with the aim of their "self-deporting," and in addition creating disincentives for the arrival of new immigrants without the required documentation (Cantalapiedra, 2016)."

Arizona's SB1070 is an anti-immigrant law passed in 2010. This law required police to determine the immigration status of those who were detained due to reasonable suspicion such as not having the appropriate documentation to be in the United States. Boushey and Luedtke (2011) state the restrictive immigration law of Arizona in 2010 has revived a debate. Arizona's immigration pattern began to develop themes of border control policies, failure of immigration reform, as well as the rise of anti-immigrant policies. The support of Arizona's SB1070 derived from economic, socio-cultural, and security factors. According to the Pew Hispanic Center, estimates show that approximately 500,000 undocumented immigrants resided in Arizona in 2008. Nearly all (94%) of these undocumented immigrants are from Mexico. After the law was enacted, "One-in-ten

Hispanics said that they have been asked by police or other authorities about their immigration status.” During a 2008 National Survey of Latinos, nearly one-in-ten Hispanics said they had been stopped by the police or other authorities and asked about their immigration status.

The number of deportations increased from 3 million in 1980 to 11.9 million in 2008. The increase in the number of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. also goes hand in hand with the increase in the number of deportations or removals by the federal government (Hispanic Pew Research, 2010).

According to the Pew Research Center (2017), 67% of adults in Arizona consider themselves Christian. Forty percent of adults affiliate themselves with the Republican Party while 39% are affiliated with the Democratic Party. Arizona’s SB1070 policy caused strife among some of the religious population. “Local clergy and religious organizations have added their voices to the stream of protests that the bill will result in discrimination and hurt the economy (The Arizona Republic, 2010).”

Gerald Kicanas is a bishop who was on the frontlines of the immigration controversy. He was one of several US Catholic bishops who were against the tough immigration laws that were in place in 2010. During an interview, Gerald was asked whether or not he was going to attempt to stop the bill SB1070. He responded that he would act based on what would be deemed appropriate. There was a concern within the state among religious leaders. Every Christian tradition speaks of the importance of welcoming the stranger. “I don’t know that we’ll be bringing the lawsuits forward. Those will be brought forward by, certainly, others, but we will review those, and perhaps

consider being a friend of the court where it would be appropriate (Arizona Immigration Law, 2010).”

In response to the same bill, Bishop Kirk S. Smith of the Episcopal Diocese of Arizona states along with many other religious leaders that this is a terrible law. “Legal things are important, political things are important, but people’s basic human rights are the most important thing, and that’s where the churches have an obligation, in my way of thinking, to stand up.” Among their clergy, there also seems to be a divide on immigration policy.

Religious leader, John Carlson stated that when religious groups speak out on public policy, Arizona lawmakers are attentive unless it is regarding immigration issues (Del Puerto, 2010). Religious leaders present a broad spectrum of faiths and denominations are disregarded as they plea for human solutions to the border crisis. Religious groups from every denomination of the Christian faith worked together to oppose the immigration policies in place stating that it contradicts the doctrine of love and the treatment of strangers. Religious leaders who were Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Jewish, Episcopal, and Methodist wrote a letter to Governor Jan Brewer urging her to veto SB1070. After the bill was signed, a group of bishops went to Washington D.C. to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform. Bishop Gerald Kicanas posted a letter on the diocese’s website stating that the new law is flawed and does not portray migrants the right way.

Faith groups did more than just quote scripture; they also held press conferences, lobbied towards Congress and met with state lawmakers. Carlson shares that one Pastor sued the state over the law. Representative Krysten Sinema stated that the organized

efforts against SB1070 were largely driven by Christian communities. They did not win because politics beat out religion. Senator Linda Gray who is a Republican stated that there is an aspect of following the law that was also Christ's teaching. This is what she is going to follow (Del Puerto, 2010). Senator Ron Gould, also a Republican in Arizona stated that his religious beliefs are a factor when voting on legislation. He provides migrants with food and water but would have no issue with turning them into the authorities if they were violating the law. Del Puerto states that Arizona residents were frustrated by the lack of action from the federal government and they were more willing to support a state's right movement that included state-level immigration laws.

Fife states that he along with many other religious leaders have worked extremely hard on advocating for immigration reform during the Bush and Obama administrations. He believes that while it is a good policy design, it is unattainable under the current Trump administration. Providing sanctuary again to keep families together and preventing the removal of those who have deportation orders is the priority. Over a thousand congregations across the country have signed up to provide sanctuary for migrants and refugees. Over 400 cities and counties declared themselves sanctuary cities or counties.

Mark Adams, ordained pastor and director of Frontera de Cristo has lived on the United States border and has been advocating for immigration reform since the late 1990s. His ministries mission is building relationships and understanding across borders. The Presbyterian Ministry has advocated for a more open immigration system. This includes one that recognizes the value of families and provides the ability to cross the border back and forth in safe and legal ways. "Since 2001, our goal has been to advocate for an

immigration policy that would fix a lot of the things that have not worked in our immigration system. We have not been successful” (M. Adams, personal communication, September 18, 2017). The last policy that provided a little more openness in terms of immigration was in 1986, which provided a process for legalization. By the late 90s, a legal system was not in place for people to come through the port of entry. In 2001, Adams wanted to see an immigration system that provided legalization for those in the United States who were undocumented or in the shadows living in fear. That was not provided. Instead, he witnessed an escalation of border build up in terms of militarization. He has observed the destructive forces of the United States security apparatus on the border, which has led to more deaths and more injuries including psychological damage to people on both sides of the border. “We have spent billions of dollars on border security.” Adams states that these elements are important to him and the Presbyterian ministry.

Pastor of University Presbyterian Church, Eric Ledermannn agrees that the United States immigration system is broken. “It is broken because it is inconsistently applied but also racially biased particularly against people who have darker skin color” (E. Ledermannn, personal communication, October 17, 2017) He provides support to this statement by saying the immigration quotas that the United States has in place are actually lowest for those coming from Mexico. He considers this completely racially and culturally biased. “There seems to be this effort to criminalize people who are crossing the borders because they are escaping violence. We criminalize being brown.” There are push and pull factors that drive migration from Mexico to the United States. “We want

them to pick our fruit but then we want them to go home and I do not think that is fair. It is an empire mentality.”

All three interviewees stated that they advocate on a political level. Frontera de Cristo has been a part of the Southern Border Community Coalition for 10 years. This group includes people from different faith backgrounds, human rights backgrounds, businesses, elected officials, and law enforcement officials. Advocating for immigration reform has been a big battle for Adams. On a local level, FDC has helped organize an event called Douglas for Just Immigration, which has helped the city pass the resolution that made Douglas a Welcoming City. Adams meets with local and state representatives in order to share the voices that are not typically heard. Adams recently met with Representative Martha McSally, also chair of the Border and Maritime Security Subcommittee. This subcommittee is responsible for oversight of all relevant aspects of visa, border, port security, and maritime security (Homeland Security Committee, 2017). Adams states that advocacy is an important aspect of attempting to influence power and elected officials.

Fife has been engaged in human rights throughout his whole life. This includes during his time in Seminary during the 1960s. He participated in the civil rights movement. He supported Cesar Chavez and the farm workers. For him, this was not political, but faith advocacy among political contestations. He did this because it was required of him as a person of faith. Fife puts his faith before his political party. “I do faith in the midst of the public arena.” Fife also helped start an organization called No More Deaths, a humanitarian organization that promotes efforts to put an end to the deaths of migrants in the desert (No More Deaths, 2017). Another human rights group

called Tucson Samaritans consists of people of faith and conscience who are directly responding to the crisis on the United States and Mexico border (Tucson Samaritans, 2017). No More Deaths and Samaritans are out in the desert everyday and providing humanitarian assistance.

Ledermann participates in an annual Migrant Trail where human right advocates and faith leaders walk 75 miles in the desert to call an end to the border deaths. He states that this is political action. Ledermann states that he wears his clerical collar on purpose. He wants people to know that the religious community is supporting immigrants. "My job is to amplify that voice. "I am a middle aged, heterosexual, white male. Could I be any more typical of power and privilege in the United States? I am the symbol of privilege in this country so lending my voice to this movement is important." He has shown up at the capital, participated in national movements, and has signed letters all while not dehumanizing his opponents.

The three pastors were asked to reveal what strategies were used to convince their audience to welcome the stranger. They were asked to explain what methods they used to frame immigrants in a positive light. Adams stated that his strategy includes shifting the immigration conversation from the political, ideological, and economic perspective to a lens of faith. Adams challenges his audience by asking people the following question; "How does your faith form your perspective on immigration?" Often times, his audience brings up the concept of fear. He reminds people that in scripture, Jesus never asked people to respond in fear. "As Christians, we are called to respond in faith even in the midst of things that might be scary or fearful. So often even in the churches, people respond to issues of immigration from fear or from ignorance."

Another strategy used by Adams includes workshops and sermons. Adams invites his audience to write down all of the scripture passages they can think of that have to do with issues of movement of people, the stranger, the alien, or the foreigner. Before the session ends, the audience come up with a whole list of scriptures. Adams encourages people to share the common themes of the passages and to reflect on what that means for people of faith. He reminds them that migration is not a new concept for us in this time or place. "The prophetic piece is we say to folks that if you respond in ways that are fearful, that is not a faith filled response. People will then ask how they should respond in faith." Another activity Adams uses is a map exercise. In this activity, people go to different places on a map including where they were born, where their parents were born, and where their ancestors came from. Adams then asks the participants why their parents, grandparents, or ancestors came to the United States. The answers typically include political, economic, or personal reasons. Adams shares that those reasons of migrating are also the same reasons mentioned in scripture and they are a part of our story of faith.

The most effective strategy is providing people with the opportunity to engage with family members of those who have crossed the border. By utilizing the contact theory, this frames the conversation from the ideological and the political to the human.

"The other piece that is a real lesson for us as a ministry is that we are often able to have folks come to the border. Many people come already with an idea that they want to be open about immigration but some people do not. Some people come with the fear and they have the opportunity to engage with family members and having those personal contacts with people impacts their view of immigration; away from the political view and to a reality that we are called to respond in faith to this human reality of immigration."

Adams believes that it is not a certain argument that convinces people to welcome immigrants, but rather an experience. He states that he can think of many economic and political benefits of welcoming immigrants. "When it comes down to it, if people do not see the faith in humanity or how our policies impact people, then it does not matter." His final question becomes, "how do you build from that experience to make real political change?"

Frontera de Cristo is active on social media and sends out monthly newsletters. These newsletters provide information on the six areas of ministry. They share personal stories of immigrants and frame the discussion in a way that humanizes immigrants. They also provide facts and personal testimonies of those who have worked with immigrants.

Fife replied with the same effective strategy to convince his audience to welcome noncitizens. He stated that his work as a pastor was to connect his congregation directly related to the people who were suffering. "Whether it was the homeless, the immigrant, the refugee, the hungry; it was my job to get people in this congregation into relationship with folks who were suffering, who were oppressed or marginalized. I then just let that relationship work." This method allowed people to understand the suffering, oppression, and threat of life that the refugees could potentially experience if there were to be detained and deported. Fife stated that this is the Sanctuary Movement. If anyone argued with him, he would invite the person to come with him, meet a family, and join them for dinner. By the end of the evening, the arguing ended. This method worked well for his congregation.

Ledermann states that preaching and creating the opportunity to have conversations is a strategy that he uses to convince his audience and greater community

to be welcoming to the stranger. He leads book studies, visits the border to see the fences, and volunteers with Humane Borders, an organization that puts water out on the deserts for migrants in transit. This humanitarian work is done for migrants regardless of their legal status and to prevent deaths on the border. Ledermannn challenges his progressive congregation to examine the walls that they put up. This leads to conversation about what it looks like to love their neighbors in practical terms. The issue fundamentally comes down to the arguing over ideologies rather than policies.

Ledermannn states that sadly, even for Christians, the theological and political arguments do not seem to mount to a whole lot. The economic arguments are relevant at this point in the political discourse.

“Even Christians I end up having biblical conversations with, their responses are not about religion. The economy has the most influence these days. If we want to stop illegal immigration, then we need to find a way to make it legal. People are escaping the economic challenges that I think the United States had a big hand in creating. NAFTA, for instance was a bad deal because it is hurting our neighbors to the south to the benefit of already wealthy people in the United States. For me immigration policy is not just about compassion, it is about economics. People are coming because they have to, not because they want to. Our immigration system says we are going to break your economy but then we are going to stop you at the border. Immigration is as much about global relations and trade deals because people are coming for that reason.”

Ledermannn concluded that the economic conversation is going to have the biggest impact in furthering the reform of our immigration. During Trump’s election, he portrayed immigrants as taking away American jobs. Trump believes that both undocumented and documented immigrants are replacing American workers despite the jobless rate in the United States being low. He hopes to cut legal immigration by 50

percent (Long, 2017). The political conversation surrounding immigration has also been framed as an economic issue. Long states that over 1,400 economists from across the political spectrum sent a letter to Trump. They urged him not to cut immigration and mentioned the broad economic benefit that immigrants bring to the country. The letter also stated the negative ramifications, which include harm to the economy and a demographic transformation.

Ledermann also regularly posts blogs on his site called faithandcoffee.com. He posts articles related to social justice issues. He records vlogs that show facts and include Scripture. He refers to scripture passages that mention the importance of welcoming the stranger. Ledermann also mentions the conflict between the law and church. He believes that one should not follow governments when the government violates religious values (Ledermann, 2017).

When Adams preaches he is guided by the lectionary, a book containing scriptures for the Christian faith. He states that it is hard to get away from topics that are immigration related when that is the context that he lives in. "So often, I see scripture through the lens of immigration. When I preach on different topics, themes of migration emerge." Borders and issues of immigration are the lens through which he reads Scriptures. Scripture helps illuminate issues of immigration in a faith context.

Adams stated that there is a movement of people all over the place in Scripture. When he is preaching on Sunday and the lectionary text chooses the passage for him, there is a piece on immigration." One example he uses is the passage of the Canaanite woman located in the books of Matthew and Mark. Jesus had an interaction with the Canaanite woman. He was outside of his own country when the woman crossed all social

and cultural boundaries. There was an intersecting and crossing of borders. Adams says that Jesus seems to be clear about quoting the boundaries that the Jewish law had on the gentiles or the unclean people. This woman challenges those notions and Jesus tells her that her faith has healed her daughter. The woman took risks crossing borders that have been placed because of economic, religious, and political reasons for the sake of her daughter. "This is a passage that before coming to the border, I would not have thought a lot about its relevancy to immigration. But after being here, I was surprised that there are a lot of things about immigration in those pieces and the crossing of religious borders."

Adams concludes by stating that the Pentateuch, or first five books of The Bible include a variation of loving the stranger, the foreigner, or alien as yourself at least 18 times. There is a tagline for each one of those and it is "you too were strangers in the land of Egypt." Other scriptures that are commonly used by Adams include Ephesians 2:11-22. This passage talks about the dividing wall of hostility and God's purpose for creating one new people or humanity out of two. The passage mentions the split between the Gentiles and Jewish people. Adams concludes that the take away point is that we are the outsiders. We were brought in and as a result should not exclude. Adams reflects with his congregation on the part of the passage that says that we are being built together as a holy dwelling with God's spirit. "This notion that we often allow these physical borders like the one on the United State and Mexico border whether it is a cultural, religious, or economic border, keep us from experiencing the reality of what God is doing through Jesus Christ." What struck Adams the most was how the passage reminds readers more than once to remember. This piece of Scripture never struck him until he moved to the border. The reason why God was reminding Israel to remember was because they kept

forgetting. This is relevant to us. God is reminding us repeatedly because we forget our own story as people of faith and the way that Jesus crossed all kinds of border. He brought those together who should not have been together.

Fife had a similar response to Adam. "I preached on the lectionary texts that were designated for that Sunday. It just so happens that the Bible has a lot to say on immigrants and how we are to treat them. Those texts came up frequently." Fife stated that he learned from a Rabbi that the whole Torah only says one time that you have to love our neighbor as ourselves. It is only stated once because God knew we could understand that. "But God says 37 times that you have to love the alien in your midst like yourself because God knew that we would struggle with that, so he said it over and over again." The texts in the Torah are clear on how people are to love the alien and remember that they too were slaves in the land of Egypt. He supports his claim by stating that from the Torah to the prophets and Ruth; there are all kinds of stories about caring about immigrants or refusing to care for immigrants. It does not end in the Old Testament but continues to when Jesus tells parables. One parable he uses is when Jesus states that how people were treated when they were hungry, thirsty, sick, in prison, or an alien, is how people would treat Him. Fife states that it cannot get any clearer than this unless pastors choose to ignore it.

Ledermann states that immigration is definitely a part of many of his sermons and he talks about it openly with his congregation. When Ledermann covers this topic, he mentions the fear of the stranger or the other. He mentions this because the media and those driving immigration policies are feeding people fear. Similar to Adams and Fife's response, Ledermann states that "all throughout scripture there is a value of welcoming

people period, end of story, regardless of who you are.” Jesus in the New Testament crosses cultural boundaries. One example of this is when he speaks with Samaritans who were hated, despised, and dehumanized by mainly Jewish people. Jesus challenged that mentality. “The story of the Good Samaritan is taken way out of context. Doing a good deed is not what the parable is about. It is about who is my neighbor.” Ledermann asks his congregation about their neighbor. “Your neighbor is the one that you despise, the one that you dehumanize, the one you are trying to criminalize just like the Samaritans were by the Jewish people.” Ledermann concludes that the Samaritan story is as much about immigration as the Scriptures in Deuteronomy or Leviticus is about welcoming the stranger. For him, welcoming the stranger spans from throughout Genesis to Revelations. “You read the prophets and it’s about rallying or railing against the powerful and the wealthy of Israel for taking advantage of or exploiting the stranger, the resident, the alien, or exploiting the poor or those living on the margins of society.

All three interviewees used common frames. This ultimately includes shifting the conversation to one that challenges their audience to welcome the stranger because it is the right action to do morally. The most common frame is viewing non-citizens as God’s children who are worthy of a life where they can provide for the needs of their family.

Michigan

For decades, refugees have been resettled in cities and towns across Michigan. After the Paris terrorist attack in November 2016, Governor Snyder was among the first to pause his advocacy to admit refugees. Michiganders raised their voices and called the state to do what they have been doing for decades (Gustafson, 2016). Snyder said that he wants Michigan to continue to be a welcoming place for immigrants as Trump

implements travel bans. Michigan has been one of the most welcoming states for legal immigration and properly vetted refugees (Vanhulle, 2017). Nearly 7 percent of Michigan residents are immigrants and almost 1 in 12 residents are native-born U.S. citizens with at least one immigrant parent (The American Immigration Council, 2017). Ten states in the U.S. resettle more than half of recent refugees. Michigan is included as the fourth state to have welcomed the most refugees in 2016 while Arizona is the sixth (Radford, 2016). ‘Welcoming Michigan’ along with the 19 Michigan localities support locally driven efforts to create a more welcoming, immigrant-friendly environment (Welcoming Michigan, 2017). To be a Welcoming City or County means that leaders work across multiple sectors such as government, business, and non-profits to create policies and practices that are inclusive. This includes helping entrepreneurs start a business or having government documents available in many languages. The goal is to create communities that allow immigrants and refugees to feel welcome (Welcoming, 2016).

An immigration statewide conference was held in 2016 on making Michigan a hospitable place for immigrants. This brought together nonprofits, local government leaders, and other organizations to share strategies on making Michigan more welcoming (Roth, 2016). Local governments and community leaders have been working together to create opportunities that bridge the gap between community members and immigrants and refugees. This initiative believes that Michigan thrives when mutual respect is built between foreign-born and U.S.-born people. Some of their basic principles include the following statements:

- The majority of U.S. residents are compassionate but this is clouded by the country's current immigration debate.
- Most U.S. residents are welcoming and have the shared responsibility to treat everyone with respect.
- Welcoming Michigan recognizes that immigrants are fellow human beings and reject the use of dehumanizing language. There is a commitment to raising the level of public discourse concerning immigrants and they are committed to promoting understanding of the contributions that immigrants make.
- Welcoming Michigan aims at challenging myths and stereotypes.
- Welcoming campaigns are an ideal vehicle for changing the public discourse on immigrants and immigration in their communities (Welcoming Michigan, 2017).

According to the Pew Research Center, about 70 percent of adults in Michigan have stated that they are Christian. Of this 70 percent, 25 percent are evangelical protestant, 18 percent are mainline protestant, and 18 percent are catholic. Approximately 50 percent of adults in Michigan say that religion is very important (Pew Research Center, 2017). Because of Trump's raids and deportations, several churches in Michigan have been vocal against his policies. Nine houses of worship in Michigan declared themselves sanctuaries for undocumented immigrants. They have also called other congregations to stand on what they call "the right side of history" (Warikoo, 2017). Raids in the workplace are separating families. In 2015, there were 9,000 people in Michigan scheduled for deportation (All Saints Episcopal Church, 2015). Immigration and Custom

Enforcement (ICE) officers are to avoid arrests, interviews, and searches at sensitive locations such as schools or churches. Religious leaders then offer sanctuary in their communities (Lewis, 2017). Some have also made bold statements against Trump. Reverend Jill Zundell stated that if Trump wants to deport families, he would first have to go through the congregations. Bringing publicity to cases could help prevent deportations. She used the example of an immigrant from Jordan whose deportation was stopped after many protests. Diverse houses of worship in Detroit are also seeking ways to become sanctuaries. This includes 50 church leaders who gathered in Dearborn to figure how to become sanctuaries and understand the legal ramifications (U.S. News, 2017)

The Interfaith Immigration Coalition is a partnership of faith-based organizations. They are committed to enacting fair and humane immigration reform that reflects the mandate to welcome the stranger and treat all human beings with dignity and respect. The coalition works together to advocate for just and equitable immigration policies, educate faith communities, and serve immigrant populations in the United States. More than 5,000 religious leaders signed a letter supporting refugee resettlement. Of the 5,000 signatures, over 150 were signed by religious leaders in Michigan (Interfaith Immigration Coalition, 2017). This letter was address to President Trump and Members of Congress and reminded them that the United States has the most rigorous screening process in the world. It is the nation's responsibility to receive refugees and asylum seekers who are in dire need of safety.

Kate Kooyman is an ordained minister in the Reformed Church in America. Her job is with the Christian Reformed Church of North America's Office of Social Justice. She

educates the church about issues of justice so that they are empowered to be advocates for a more just system. One of her main areas of focus is immigration and refugee policy.

In 2010, the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) in North America's synod discussed a long report about migration and immigration policy to the U.S. and Canada. At the Synod's request, a committee was tasked with studying the issue of immigration and reporting to the church leaders. The issue started with a congregation in Michigan who had begun an ESL program as a method of outreach. Immigrants joined the church, were baptized, partook in communion, and developed a relationship where they trusted the church enough to disclose their immigration status. "This raised an ethical question for the church: was it a "sin" to be undocumented" (K. Kooyman, personal communication, October 2, 2017)? Since there was confusion on this topic, this was taken to the church's leadership and regional gathering. The conclusion was that "the misunderstandings about immigration were hindering the witness of the church in communities," Kooyman stated. The Synod reported that Christians are clearly called by God to extend welcome to immigrants and refugees. The laws in the United States are broken and causing harm. There were recommendations made that instruct the church to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform:

"That synod instruct the Board of Trustees to encourage the Office of Social Justice...in collaboration with their denominational and nondenominational partners, to engage in, as a priority, policy development and advocacy strategies that will lead to immigration reform and the enactment of fair, just, and equitable laws regarding those without status in Canada and the United States. That synod encourage congregations and their individual members to speak out against, and seek to reform, laws and practices concerning the treatment of immigrants that appear to be unduly harsh or unjust. That synod, mindful of the need for governments to create and enforce laws that protect the

security and integrity of a given nation's borders, nevertheless encourage congregations and church members to support the need for comprehensive immigration reform in ways that will reduce the number of people without status and/or non-status workers and provide increased opportunities for immigrants to gain legal status within the nation." (Office of Social Justice, 2015)

Kooyman works hard to retell the CRC's long history of refugee resettlement since this has shaped and form the identity of the denomination. "When people remember someone they've known – a Hungarian in the 50's, or a Cambodian in the 80's – who they were once proud of helping, it is then easier for them to understand that the current refugee or immigrant is not so unlike that person."

Reverend Jill Zundel, senior pastor of Central United Methodist Church in downtown Detroit states that the immigration system has been a complete mess for decades. "There needs to be a better streamlined approach that is affordable and easier for people looking for a better life." Zundel is also an advocate for immigration reform. Central Church has been doing works of peace and justice for over 200 years and her audience is open and welcoming to noncitizens. Her work includes finding common ground for those who are not in favor of immigration reform. Immigrants are prevalent in Detroit with a large Hispanic population along with Dearborn where the highest numbers of Muslims live in the United States. The United Methodist Church's social principle includes the following:

"We recognize, embrace, and affirm all persons, regardless of country of origin, as members of the family of God. We affirm the right of all persons to equal opportunities for employment, access to housing, health care, education, and freedom from social discrimination. We urge the Church and society to recognize the gifts, contributions, and struggles of those who are immigrants and to advocate for justice for all."

Rev. Wayne Dziekan is the Director of the Secretariat for Justice and Peace for the Catholic Diocese in Gaylord, Michigan. His stance on immigration reform reflects the stance of the Catholic Church. The United States Conference of the Catholic Bishops shares that the Catholic social teaching provides the foundation for how the church addresses issues related to migration. The teaching is guided by Scripture and the Church's moral teachings (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2017). The Catholic Catechism instructs people that good governments have two responsibilities: to welcome the foreigner out of charity and respect for the human person and to secure one's border and enforce the law for the common good. In this teaching, people have the right to migrant and the government must accommodate this right to the greatest extent possible (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2013). In 2003, the U.S. Catholic Bishops released a pastoral letter of migration. This letter stressed that when people cannot find employment in their country of origin to support their families, they have the right to find work elsewhere in order to survive. It affirms that sovereign nations should provide ways to accommodate this right. "The more powerful economic nations, a stronger obligation to accommodate migration flows" (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2013).

Paul Stankewitz, Policy Advocate with the Michigan Catholic Conference affirms this belief and states that the Catholic Church promotes comprehensive immigration reform. The Michigan Catholic Conference serves as the official voice of the Catholic Church on matters of public policy (Michigan Catholic Conference, 2017). Their purpose is to develop and promote sound public policy to enrich the lives of people in Michigan. This reform recognizes the need of the country to have secure borders but at the same

time recognizes the inherent human right to migrant for the betterment of the individual and their families. "Though it is a complicated issue due to the intertwining and interwoven aspects of immigration reform, the right for people to be refugees from political economic oppression needs to be addressed all together" (P. Stankewitz, personal communication, October 10, 2017).

Three of the four interviewees stated that they were active in political advocacy. Kooyman attends town hall meetings, meets with Congress and their staffers, and sends out emails that invite constituents to send an email to Congress. She advocates through Op Eds, letters to the editor in newspapers, and through press conferences. Zundel also holds press conferences to spread the word that her congregation is a sanctuary church. She meets with Senators to encourage the sponsoring of specific bills. Central United Methodist Church is a member of two groups: Detroit Regional Interfaith Voices for Equity and Michigan United. These groups have helped organize and amplify the voice that supports immigrants.

Dziekan stated that as much as he would like to be more involved politically, he has his hands full working in the trenches with people. He states that the Michigan Catholic Conference in Lansing is involved with the political advocacy for the Catholic Church. There is a U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops based in Washington who are doing on the ground advocacy. Stankewitz states that the Michigan Catholic Conference is nonpartisan and does not give endorsements or donations. His political advocacy includes personal meetings with legislatures and providing public testimonies.

When interviewees were asked about their strategies to convince people to welcome the stranger, they responded with the following. Kooyman performs a series of

workshops on top of preaching to convince her audience to welcome the stranger. She often talks about immigration policy to illustrate systemic injustice that the church is called to combat. She mentions attitudes about immigrants as an example of xenophobia or the sin of individualism. She states that many people have false ideas about immigration. Many Christians believe that a “refugee” is simply a desperate immigrant and the policy of the United States is clearly welcoming for them. One effective exercise done by Kooyman includes a simulation that shows people how to immigrate legally. People receive a small card with a description of a prospective immigrant’s life and they must choose from the following: employment, family, refugee/asylum, or diversity lottery. People discover truths that surprise them. “This includes the fact that people must already have a job (unlike many of their grandparents, who came willing to work but did not already have employment when they immigrated).” Other truths that astonish her audience include that a family must be an immediate family member and must be a U.S. citizen in order to invite someone to immigrate. The wait times are remarkably long. A refugee is a very strictly defined category and only 1% of the world’s refugees are ever resettled to a new country. The diversity lottery is not accessible to the poor. Kooyman ends the simulation by talking about those who are left out of the system completely. She shares the myths surrounding undocumented immigrants in the United States, such as they do pay taxes and cannot receive welfare benefits (K. Kooyman, personal communication, October 2, 2017).

Other effective strategies done by Kooyman include a historical timeline that outlines important pieces of legislation and moments of United States history as well as how Scripture can inform views on immigration. “People learn that their immigrant

ancestors (if they are white) were likely the recipient of a system that was rigged in their favor, and that explicitly excluded those who were not white.” Her audience learns about the system their ancestors used and how it was fundamentally different from the system currently in place. If their ancestors were to come under this system, most likely they would not be able to enter legally. Once the audience receives these facts and dispels myths, she highlights the themes included in Scripture. Immigrants are like all humans, created in the image of God. They have inherent dignity and it is God’s will that they flourish. She reminds people that most figures in The Bible crossed borders at some point for the same reason people do so today. She ends the session with a discussion of current events, the political reality, and a call to action. This includes writing Congress about passing the Dream Act or other relevant legislature in favor of welcoming the stranger. Kooyman concludes by stating, “As Christians, we do not primarily think of or talk about immigrants in economic terms, but in these terms.”

The Office of Social Justice began a campaign called “immigrants are a blessing, not a burden” to try and change the conversation about immigrants. This campaign has empowered people to become advocates. They realize that politics have increasingly framed the issue in an unjust way. This campaign regularly shares articles on social media outlets to equip congregations to change the perception of immigration. An article was published to share the four important ways that churches can engage deeply in immigration work. This includes learning and sharing the myths and facts, reflecting a care for immigrants during worship, having meaningful connections with immigrant communities, and effectively advocating for more just policies (Office of Social Justice,

2017). This helps frame the conversation on immigration in a positive way. By the church being involved, immigration is framed to be an ethical or moral issue deserving attention.

Zundel also uses political and theological arguments. Her effective strategy includes preaching to her audience. “I looked back and it began when Trump did his call for a Muslim ban. I have since preached at least ten times on immigration.” Zundel stresses the importance of terminology and reminds her audience to use the term undocumented as opposed to illegal. She uses political arguments to show the complex process to become a citizen. She prints out maps to show the path to citizenship and once people realize how difficult it is, the discussion moves finding solutions such as immigration reform.

Dziekan shares that his most effective strategy is preaching and promoting the catholic social doctrine and turning away from political ideology or network news. He states that he does use Biblical references but very minimally. “It is necessary to remind people of the wealth of Scripture passages about immigrants” (W. Dziekan, personal communication, October 10, 2017). The issue he faces is that people who are already open to immigrants and want to learn more, are already aware of the Scripture passages. “The angry people who attend church say this is great but they still need to come in legally. The scripture passages do not do anything for them.” As a result, Dziekan’s approach is informing them that the immigration law system is broken and immoral. He shares that those trying to come into the United States cannot enter legally. His audience, both catholic and non-Catholic is referred to the justiceforimmigrants.org website. The site includes resources regarding the stance that the Catholic Church has on comprehensive immigration reform. He also refers people to the Immigrant Legal

Resource Center (ILCR) for additional resources. Dziekan has also taken groups to the United States and Mexico border and has received training and presentations from John Fife regarding sanctuary.

Stankewitz stresses the inherent dignity of the human person to his audience. This is done through discussions and publications. “We need to respect the dignity of the person and try to appreciate their reason for wanting to come to the United States.” This is the starting point for dialogue since it is easy to get lost in the numbers and forget the human face of the issue. Stankewitz also uses economic arguments. He states that studies show the value that immigrants bring to the economy. This includes the value they pay in taxes, the wages they put into the local economy, the services they provide especially in the agricultural sector. Despite the United States being a nation of immigrants, Stankewitz would think that people would be open to immigrants but he states there is a tradition of anti-immigrant sentiment that goes back to the very founding of the nation. “This has to do with the suspicion that the latest groups of newcomers are taking away jobs from Americans.” Stankewitz always explains immigration as a human dignity issue as opposed to an economic issue.

What motivate many of the religious leaders to welcome the stranger is the commands that are provided in The Bible. Dr. Daniel Carroll, professor at Denver Seminary states that the Bible has a lot to say about immigrants and immigration. The Hebrew word *ger*, which is the closest word to the concept of immigrants, appears 92 times in the Old Testament alone (World Relief, 2017). He shares multiple passages in the Bible that mention the foreigner, stranger, or immigrant. Many of the scriptures he

mentions have the theme of loving immigrants, not mistreating or oppressing them, providing for them as well as showing hospitality.

Kooyman uses scripture passages to remind her audience the call that Christians have to be welcoming. “Welcome the stranger is the second-most repeated command in the Old Testament right after the first which is the command to worship only one God.” The New Testament’s calling to hospitality (*philoxenia*) is not love of those whom you already know or feel comfortable with, but it is love (*philo*) of the stranger (*xenia*). She mentions the controversial Scripture of the rule of law or Romans 13. “Romans 13 is not where we begin, but it is part of our calling.” She explains that the context of the Romans and all of Scripture is that the Kingdom of God is our primary citizenship and we are called to steward whatever we are given (time, talent, treasure) including the power that we are afforded by our citizenship. “Paul did this. Stewardship of power, if we are faithful to our calling as Christians, is to advocate for justice on behalf of those who are deprived of it.” Kooyman also uses the passage of the Good Samaritan. She shares how the Bible has a familiar theme of the stranger bringing a blessing. In this case, the Samaritan brought healing and compassion to the man that was half-dead. “Our call to hospitality (*philoxenia* – the love of the stranger) is often expressed through the story of an angel, the presence of God, or Jesus himself coming to faithful people through “the stranger.”

When preaching, Zundel also uses scripture from both the Old and New Testament. The most common scriptures used are ones that include that command of not mistreating the foreigner (Leviticus 19:33-34 and Jeremiah 7:5-7), providing for the

stranger (Matthew 25:35 and Ezekiel 47:22), and showing mercy and compassion to the foreigner (Zechariah 7:9-10).

Dziekan does not use as many Biblical references when trying to convince the audience to welcome the stranger. He uses the political approach stating that the immigration law system is broken. Stankewitz stated a similar response but when quoting scripture, he uses the passage in Leviticus 19:33-34 which states: "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God." Scriptures are used often in the material published by the Catholic Church.

The Michigan Catholic Conference has numerous marketing materials and Op-Eds that are regularly published. They provide new releases and additional resources on their website. The strong support that the Catholic Church has in favor of immigration reform and welcoming the stranger is obviously displayed (Michigan Catholic Conference, 2017). Similar to other publications, these materials frame the immigration discussion in a Biblical way.

The four interviewees used the similar framing techniques that Arizona interviewees used. Michigan interviews focused on the inherent dignity of noncitizens and the importance of viewing them as God's people. The conversation was once again shifted to the theological one while using other arguments to make their point.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

Immigration is a controversial and timely topic. During the 2016 presidential election, Donald Trump used his platform to frame immigration in a negative way. This included associating immigrants with violence, terrorism, and economic downturn. The group theory was used by Trump during his presidency to portray a competition for what he believes are scarce resources. Because of the negative rhetoric from news outlets and politicians, churches and faith leaders have taken it upon themselves to advocate for immigrants. This research shows the work they are doing to reframe the conversation to one that shows the benefits of welcoming non-citizens into the United States. This research is important because it reveals what strategies leaders are using in Arizona and Michigan. This research can assist other faith leaders in utilizing or mobilizing their congregations to be a part of the immigration conversation.

While interview participants have shared similar themes and strategies on welcoming the stranger, there is more to be researched. Limitations of this study include time and limited number of religious leaders available for interviews. Only a few leaders of specific denominations such as Catholicism, the Christian Reformed Church, and the Presbyterian Church were chosen for this research. While their denominations have a history of being a part of the immigration conversation, their views do not represent all members. This research is not exhaustive of the work that religious leaders have done and are currently doing. This study did not include qualitative data. Other methods could be utilized to find the exact word choice, terminology, and style that religious leaders are using to convince their audiences.

Conclusion

Immigration has been a complex issue throughout the history of the United States. The history of policy regarding immigration is an ebb and flow, including periods of welcome and periods of denying non-citizens from entering. Many reasons as to why Americans are not welcoming of non-citizens include fear of the unknown, idea of threat, or competition for scarce resources. Public opinion states that many clergy are in favor of comprehensive immigration reform, which would provide a pathway to citizenship. Religious leaders have successfully persuaded respondents who identify with their religious denominations to think differently about immigration and the difficulties of undocumented immigrants. Religion plays a role with how church attendees react to messages from their leaders. Religious leaders often speak about immigration issues in a way that expresses strong support for liberal reforms of the immigration system. This includes asking Americans to take a sympathetic view of the nation's immigrant population.

Since immigration is a moral issue, it is only natural for the church to play a role in this conversation. Religious organizations have been a part of the immigration discussion. A strong example of this is the case of the Sanctuary Movement. We can see that religious leaders have been extremely active and successful with convincing their audiences to welcome non-citizens. They did this by using theological, economic, and political arguments and framing the conversation using the lens of faith. John Fife is the ultimate example of being successful at mobilizing his congregation as well as the church in the United States to welcome immigrants. He utilizes the contact theory, which states that there will be less tension and fear when there is contact or interaction between two

parties. He does this by connecting his church with immigrants, migrants, and refugees. His strategy is purely creating relationships and sharing the scripture passages that are provided by The Bible. He states that these Biblical passages mention the topic of immigration more often than one would think.

The six interviewees from Arizona and Michigan also shared their strategies to influence their audience to be welcoming to the stranger. Despite analyzing two different states on the opposite side of the country, the answers of how they framed immigration showed similar themes and terminology. All of the interviewees are in favor and advocate for immigration reform. They all use theological arguments to convince their audiences. These arguments include Scripture passages from both the Old and New Testament. The inherent dignity of the immigrant came up as a way to humanize immigrants. All of the religious leaders used the phrase of welcoming the stranger, coming from The Bible.

Adams uses language of invitation and not of force when addressing his audience. He gently invites his listeners to see immigration as a faith issue and respond in faith, not fear. He uses workshops similar to Kooyman to provide a big picture of the immigration crisis in the United States. Both Adam and Fife frame the conversation from a political one to a faith or theological one. They both work to dispel myths by using the contact theory. To both of the interviewees, connecting their audience with immigrants show to be the most effective strategy. Both of them preach on immigration and see scripture through the context of immigration. Lederman states that preaching and inviting conversation is the most effective strategy. This also includes taking groups to Mexico to interact with migrants and inviting his audience to volunteer. His arguments also include economic ones given the current political conversation about immigrants taking jobs

from Americans. All three interviewees from Arizona use The Bible and mention the high number of scripture passages provided.

Interviewees from Michigan also share similar themes. Kooyman, Zundel, Dziekan, and Stankewitz state that the immigration system is broken. They all use political arguments to support their theological ones. Dziekan in particular uses economic arguments. All convince their audience by stating that the system is incredibly flawed and needs to be fixed. Kooyman, Dziekan, and Stankewitz use publications and materials. Dziekan promotes the Catholic social doctrine as a way to show that immigration is a faith issue. The most common Scripture passages include the Good Samaritan passage in the book of Luke as well as the passage in Leviticus that command people to treat the stranger like a native born.

The role of religious leaders and movements is an important part of the immigration conversation. The current immigration conversation from political leaders such as Trump have not been receptive to ideas including comprehensive immigration reform. Because of this, immigration leaders and churches are advocating, preaching, volunteering, and mobilizing their congregations to speak against injustices done to those they are called to welcome.

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